

Lesson 31

Words To Learn This Week

commuter
confine
idle
idol
jest
patriotic
dispute
valor
lunatic
vein
uneventful
fertile

"All my best is dressing old words new."

—Shakespeare, *Sonnet lxxvi*

1. **commuter** (kə mūt' ə) one who travels regularly, especially over a considerable distance, between home and work
 - a. The average **commuter** would welcome a chance to live in the vicinity* of his or her work.
 - b. Have your **commuter's** ticket verified* by the conductor.
 - c. A novel* educational program gives college credit to **commuters** who listen to a lecture while they are traveling to work.
2. **confine** (kən fīn') keep in; hold in
 - a. The fugitive* was caught and **confined** to jail for another two years.
 - b. A virus that was circulating* in the area **confined** it to his house.
 - c. Polio **confined** President Roosevelt to a wheelchair.
3. **idle** (ī' dl) not doing anything; not busy; lazy; without any good reason or cause; to waste (time)
 - a. Any attempt to study was abandoned* by the student, who **idled** away the morning.
 - b. The **idle** hours of a holiday frequently* provide the best time to take stock.
 - c. Do not deceive* yourself into thinking that these are just **idle** rumors.
4. **idol** (ī' dl) a thing, usually an image, that is worshiped; a person or thing that is loved very much
 - a. This small metal **idol** illustrates* the art of ancient Rome.
 - b. John Wayne was the **idol** of many young people who liked cowboy movies.
 - c. Scientists are still trying to identify* this **idol** found in the ruins.
5. **jest** (jest) joke; fun; mockery; thing to be laughed at; to joke; poke fun
 - a. Though he spoke in **jest**, Mark was undoubtedly* giving us a message.
 - b. Do not **jest** about matters of morality.*
 - c. In some quarters,* honesty and hard work have become subjects of **jest**.
6. **patriotic** (pā trē āt' ik) loving one's country; showing love and loyal support for one's country
 - a. It is **patriotic** to accept your responsibilities to your country.
 - b. The **patriotic** attitude of the captive* led him to refuse to cooperate with the enemy.
 - c. Nathan Hale's **patriotic** statement has often been quoted:* "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country."
7. **dispute** (dis pūt') disagree; oppose; try to win; a debate or disagreement
 - a. Our patriotic* soldiers **disputed** every inch of ground during the battle.
 - b. The losing team **disputed** the contest up until the final* minute of play.
 - c. Many occupants* of the building were attracted* by the noisy **dispute**.
8. **valor** (val' ə) bravery; courage
 - a. The **valor** of the Vietnam veterans deserves the highest commendation.*
 - b. No one will dispute* the **valor** of Washington's men at Valley Forge.
 - c. The fireman's **valor** in rushing into the flaming house saved the occupants* from a horrid* fate.
9. **lunatic** (l ōō' nə tik) crazy person; insane; extremely foolish
 - a. Only a **lunatic** would willingly descend* into the monster's cave.
 - b. Certain **lunatic** ideas persist* even though they have been rejected* by all logical* minds.
 - c. My roommate has some **lunatic** ideas about changing the world.

10. **vein** (vān) mood; a blood vessel that carries blood to the heart; a crack or seam in a rock filled with a different mineral
 - a. A **vein** of lunacy* seemed to run in the family.
 - b. Mario's wrist was severely* cut by the rock, causing his **vein** to bleed heavily.
 - c. Explorations disclosed* the rich **vein** of copper in the mountain.
11. **uneventful** (un' i vent' fəl) without important or striking happenings
 - a. After the variety* of bewildering* experiences at the start of our trip, we were happy that the rest of the journey was **uneventful**.
 - b. Our annual* class outing proved quite **uneventful**.
 - c. The meeting seemed **uneventful** but expert observers realized that important decisions were being made.
12. **fertile** (fir' tl) bearing seeds or fruit; producing much of anything
 - a. Chicks hatch from **fertile** eggs.
 - b. The loss of their **fertile** lands threw the farmers into a panic.*
 - c. A **fertile** mind need never be uneasy* about finding life uneventful.*

Read the following passage to see how the new words are used in it.

Record Holders

The Guinness Book of World Records is full of fascinating facts. For example, the champion **commuter** is Bruno Leuthardt of Germany, who traveled 370 miles each day for ten years to his teaching job and was late only once because of a flood. The record for being buried alive is held by Emma Smith of Ravenshead, England. She was **confined** in a coffin for 100 days. What a way to spend the **idle** hours! Peter Clark of London collected 1276 autographed pictures of famous men and women. Obviously* not all were his **idols**, but he did set a record.

What drives people to these unusual practices? Some

are simply done in **jest**, some for **patriotic** reasons. Certainly no one would **dispute** the **valor** of the "record-makers," even if the records themselves may be no more lasting than a popular* song. While one need not be a **lunatic**, he must have a **vein** of recklessness* to participate in such activities as bungee-jumping, high diving, or parachute jumping.

If you are tired of leading a dull, **uneventful** life, remember the mortals* whose **fertile** imaginations have found novel* ways to add excitement to their lives.

Place one of the new words in each of the blanks below.

1. Celia was left _____ after working so hard all her life.
2. I would _____ that claim if I did not know you were jesting.*
3. This site* will attract many home buyers because of the advantages for the _____.
4. The early pioneers exhibited* great _____ in braving the hardships* of the new frontiers.
5. A _____ of caution* helped Mr. Samler to avoid* the obvious* risks in his new job.
6. It is no misfortune* to spend a few _____ days without excitement and conflict.*
7. The _____ element of society ignores* the warnings about the dangers of drugs.
8. Since the statement was made in _____, it is not a valid* point to argue.
9. I asked my opponent* in the debate* to _____ his remarks to the subject under discussion.
10. How can we transmit* a healthy _____ view to the next generation?
11. People have always wanted to inhabit* the land where the soil is most _____.
12. People still worship the _____ of greed* and power.

Answer key, p. 150

Exercise

Now make up your own sentences, one for each of the new words you have just been taught.

1. _____

2. _____